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CIO

Delegation

TO THE
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UNION



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REPORT
of the
CIO DELEGATION
to the
SOVIET UNION

Submitted by

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Chairman of the Delegation

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"To Promote Friendship And Understanding..."

THE victory of the United Nations over the military power of fascism opened up prospects of a new era of international understanding, democratic progress, world peace and prosperity. The Congress of Industrial Organizations, the vanguard of American labor, rallied behind the plans of President Roosevelt and other leaders of the United Nations to continue this wartime unity into the post-war period.



PHILIP MURRAY

Because we believe that unity between governments must be based on unity among peoples, we set about forging unbreakable unity among the working people of all countries and played a leading part in the formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

In pursuit of this general purpose the CIO has also been developing the exchange of fraternal labor delegations and encouraging all other steps that will promote a closer understanding between the workers of the United States and other countries.

The following report of Secretary-Treasurer James B. Carey, who was chairman of the CIO delegation to the Soviet Union, embodies the observations of a representative group of outstanding CIO leaders who visited that country as guests of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions,

in return for a visit paid to the United States by a Soviet trade union delegation, invited by the CIO.

I consider this a document of first-rate importance, not only for American labor but for all who are interested in knowing the truth about the Soviet trade union movement and in promoting friendship and understanding between the peoples of our two countries. Unfortunately, there are those who prefer to sow seeds of distrust and suspicion, who magnify the social and cultural differences into unbridgeable gulfs, and who seek to divide rather than to unite the world.

It is my hope that this report will help to prevent the division of the world into hostile blocs and to eliminate hostility against the great people whose cooperation was so essential to United Nations victory and whose continued friendship and cooperation is equally essential for lasting peace and world prosperity.



Philip Murray
President, CIO

Report of the CIO Delegation to the Soviet Union

RECOGNIZING the all-important function of the world labor movement in the war against fascism and foreseeing the imperativeness of living together, working together and meeting together socially to achieve a lasting peace through action of the common peoples, the Congress of Industrial Organizations at its 1944 Convention in Chicago, adopted the following resolution:

"RESOLVED: (1) The CIO endorses and approves President Murray's action in accepting an invitation of the British Trades Union Congress to attend both a preliminary conference in London on December 4 of representatives of the British Trades Union Congress, the Soviet Union and of the United States, and the full conference in the same city early in January of next year.

"(2) The CIO supports the project of a new single powerful international labor body that shall include all the unions of free countries on a basis of equality, excluding none and relegating none to a secondary place, and be capable of defending the interests of the common man."

Subsequent developments resulted in the establishment of the World Federation of Trade Unions with the CIO playing a principal part. In implementing further the work of the WFTU, President Philip Murray in the summer of 1945 extended invitations to the British Trades Union Congress, the French Confederation of Labor and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to send delegations to visit the United States as guests of the CIO.

The first to respond was the Soviet trade union movement, which in July 1945 sent a delegation to the United States, including representatives of its major unions and headed by Vasili Kuznetsov, Chairman of the AUCCTU. This delegation made a tour of American industrial cities, visited many plants in its study of American labor conditions, and had many opportunities to meet with CIO unionists and to establish closer ties of friendship and understanding between our two movements.

At the same time, Mr. Kuznetsov on behalf of the AUCCTU extended an invitation to the CIO to send a return delegation to the Soviet Union for similar purposes. It was decided by President Murray and the CIO Executive Officers that this delegation should be made up of CIO representatives attending the convention of the World Federation of Trade

Unions in Paris, and that it should proceed to the Soviet Union immediately upon the conclusion of this convention.

It had been expected that President Murray would head the delegation to both the WFTU and the Soviet Union, but the many domestic questions raised by the end of military operations made his continued presence in the United States indispensable.

In Mr. Murray's absence, Secretary-Treasurer James B. Carey headed the delegation that left Paris for Moscow on October 10. Other members of the delegation were CIO Vice-Pres. Allan S. Haywood, Director of Organization; Vice-Pres. Albert Fitzgerald, President of United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers; Vice-Pres. John Green, President of Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers; Vice-Pres. Emil Rieve, President of Textile Workers Union; Vice-Pres. Joseph Curran, President of National Maritime Union; Vice-Pres. Reid Robinson, President of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers; Lee Pressman, CIO General Counsel; John Abt, General Counsel of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; Len De Caux, CIO Publicity Director and Editor of The CIO News; and Vincent Sweeney, Publicity Director and Editor of the United Steelworkers.

Sidney Hillman, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and Delegate Thomas Burns of the United Rubber Workers, were unable to make the trip because they had to return to the United States immediately after the WFTU meeting. Similarly, Director of Councils John Brophy and Director of International Affairs Michael Ross were required to remain in Paris to participate in International Labor Organization conferences.

After a brief stopover in Berlin, the CIO delegation arrived in Moscow on October 11 and remained in the Soviet Union until October 19, when it left for London enroute to the United States. The short duration of this eight-day visit was deeply regretted by the delegation, but it was necessitated by the fact that the delegation had to be back in the

United States by November 1 for the CIO Executive Board meeting preliminary to President Truman's Labor-Management Conference on November 5, and by the difficulties and delays incidental to return travel arrangements under existing conditions.



Vasili Kuznetsov, chairman of the Soviet trade union congress and host to the CIO delegation.

However, thanks to the excellent arrangements made by our Soviet trade union hosts with whom we worked out a schedule enabling us to see all that we asked or were able to see in the period, the delegation was able to cover an extraordinary amount

of ground during its visit, including a trip to Leningrad as well as Moscow, many visits to different industrial plants, and countless opportunities to meet with Soviet trade unionists and to obtain all the information we requested.

We arrived in Moscow late in the afternoon of Thursday, October 11, and were most warmly welcomed, both at the airport and at a banquet later at the National Hotel, by a delegation of representative leaders of the Soviet trade unions. Messrs. Carey, Rieve and Fitzgerald then met with Mr. Kuznetsov and his associates for a discussion of their itinerary and the persons, plants and products which they wished to see. In every case, Mr. Kuznetsov took prompt steps to fulfill their desires.

On Friday, October 12, we were taken to see an exhibition of Soviet war trophies captured from the Nazis, so arranged as to give a picture of the extent and the great difficulties and achievements of the country's war effort.

Following that, we paid a visit to the big Stalin automobile plant on the outskirts of Moscow, where we were welcomed, shown around and entertained by Director Lickachev and other plant officials, and by leaders of the Auto Workers' Union, shop committee members and active unionists.

This plant, with a capacity of 100,000 trucks a year before the war, was converted to war production, and when the Germans approached Moscow, 50 percent of its equipment was shipped east to the Urals, where a second similar plant was started. The Moscow plant is now engaged in the production of 7-passenger automobiles and trucks. Seen through American eyes, the operation is properly the production of a uniform custom-built car. The director and the workers are concentrating on efforts to step up production, and while the production might be considered low, it must be remembered that it is a tremendous improvement over the production of 10 cars in the year of 1924, the first year of automobile production.

Emphasis on Piece Rates

Wages and working conditions are covered by collective agreement with the union, with piece rates the prevailing system. About 50 percent of the plant's employees are women who get equal pay for equal work. The worker gets two weeks' vacation with pay (with four weeks for those doing hot or more trying work) and with three days' extra vacation for each five years of service in the plant.

Working hours at this and the other plants we visited are eight a day, six days a week, with time-and-a-half for overtime the first hour and double time the second hour. On night shifts and on hot or unhealthy jobs the straight-time hours are seven. Before the war, working hours were seven a day, or six on night shifts and hot jobs. During the war they went up to ten or more with overtime for all extra hours.

The workers' actual take-home pay remains about the same as during the war, we were told, despite the reduction in working hours. Director Lickachev attributed this to the greater productivity of the workers with better machinery and conditions, and to their being more rested as a result of the shorter hours.

Following a trip around the plant, the CIO delegation attended a union shop meeting, with about 100 committeemen and active unionists present. We were told how the union functions in the plant, and Chairman Carey, who addressed the meeting on behalf of the CIO delegation, explained how unions function in the United States. Questions from the

floor brought out the Soviet workers' interest in this subject, and their interest in the kind of social security of all sorts which American workers receive.

Later the same day we were shown the "Metro", Moscow's modern subway system, and remarked on the beautiful architecture, color schemes and decorations of the stations. On all Moscow subway trains a special section is reserved for women with small children, pregnant women, invalids and others who need seating and protection from subway crowds. In the evening we were entertained at a ballet in the Filial Theater. During the intermission it was announced that an American CIO delegation was present, and the audience joined in a most warm and friendly ovation.

On Saturday, October 13, the CIO delegation divided into two parts, one group going to visit a textile factory and a steel plant some miles from Moscow, while the other group remained in Moscow to visit the Krasny Proletariat Machine-Building plant and a power plant.

At the machine-building plant, now producing lathes, Director Peter Taranichev told us of the heroism of the workers during the war. He said that 100 incendiary bombs had fallen on the plant in one month alone; that it was bitterly cold in the shop and in the workers' homes, due to lack of fuel; that food and clothing were sadly lacking. But in spite of all these difficulties, dangers and hardships, the workers stuck to the job without complaint, and production actually rose month after month.

At this, as at most other plants the delegation visited, the chief complaint made was of a shortage of skilled labor. Mr. Taranichev declared that 1,000 more skilled workers were needed at this plant to achieve full production. Sixty percent of the workers at this plant are women, and we were told that as demobilization proceeds, it is hoped to increase the proportion of men employed but this will not mean any reduction in the number of women employed.

Lathes, Horns and Spoons

Mr. Taranichev informed us that the plant had produced 450 lathes in August and 457 in September. It is also producing musical instruments, spoons and forks. Because of the shortage of consumer goods in the Soviet Union it is the common practice for plants to produce consumer goods as a side line. This plant contains one of the first conveyor systems installed in the Soviet Union for the production of lathes. The plant average of pay is 600 rubles per month, with workers' monthly pay ranging from 300 to 3,000 rubles. The director said that the earnings remained

the same despite the reduction in hours that came with cessation of hostilities. One gear cutter to whom we talked said he had worked there for 21 years. He said his present job could be learned in six months and his pay was 1,500 rubles a month. His wife earns 500 rubles a month, and a daughter is in college. The gear cutter also serves as editor of the plant newspaper.

When the food shortage became acute during the war, Director Tarani- chev told us, the government turned over a farm for the exclusive use of the plant workers.

Here and at other plants, the CIO delegates visited the plant clinic, where the Director explained that medical service is free, as universally in the Soviet Union; the prophylactorium, where workers who are run down or in need of medical supervision or special diets are given preventive treatment and rest at night while continuing to work during the day; the child care center for children of working mothers, and other similar social welfare institutions.

In the late afternoon a mass meeting was held in the Home of the Unions in Moscow in honor of the CIO delegation. Pres. Vasili Kuznetsov of the AUCCTU presided and the audience was made up of some 500 active unionists. Chairman Carey, Allan Haywood and Joseph Curran addressed the meeting on behalf of the CIO delegation, joining with the Soviet trade union speakers in stressing the vital importance of close friendship and cooperation between the labor movements and the peoples of the USSR and the USA.

The Stalin Auto Factory in Moscow, visited by the CIO delegation. It's now getting back to civilian production.



Ovation for the CIO

That evening, the CIO representatives attended the ballet in the Bolshoi Theater, and were again accorded a friendly ovation by the audience. On Sunday, October 14th, the delegation was taken for a tour of the Kremlin and visited Lenin's tomb, outside which there is a constant line many blocks long of people waiting to file through and see the body of the dead Soviet leader still preserved in a lifelike manner. Because of the universal prestige accorded labor leaders in the Soviet Union, the waiting period was waived in our case. On this same tour we also saw the Czar's jewels and other evidence of the long-vanished authority of the Romanoffs. The treasure is being maintained for its cultural value.

The delegation was entertained for lunch at the United States Embassy by Ambassador Averill Harriman and spent several hours discussing with him and some of his 54 staff members various aspects of American-Soviet relations.

In the evening of the same day we attended an entertainment in the Home of the Unions with chorus, orchestra, dancers, singers, acrobats and other performers coming from the ranks of factory workers. In addition, workers' children from trade schools in Magitogorsk, Kyubishev, Saratov, Rostov and other cities who had won honors in a national competition, put on some remarkable dancing and other acts.

On Monday, October 15, the CIO delegation, before it left for Leningrad, heard the Soviet social security system outlined by A. I. Gurbonov, director of the social insurance department of the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions.

From the Cradle to the Grave

This system is very comprehensive, Mr. Gurbonov said, being designed to cover all contingencies of loss of income for a worker and his family from whatever cause. It includes benefits to women during pregnancy and childbirth; sickness and accident insurance, designed to maintain a worker's income at its average level until he can return to work; support for families whose breadwinner loses the capacity to work; old age and widows' pensions; payment of funeral expenses, and many other features.

The social security system, he pointed out, covers all wage and salary earners in the USSR. It is financed entirely by a fund collected by the government from all employing establishments in proportion to the number of employees in each, and the workers themselves are required to make no contribution to this fund from their wages.

The trade union movement has complete charge over the administration and distribution of social insurance funds. Mr. Gurbonov said.

The AUCCTU draws up the annual social insurance budget, which is then submitted to the government and passed on by the Supreme Soviet (corresponding to the U. S. Congress). Quarterly budgets are approved by the Council of People's Commissars (the cabinet). However, these governmental bodies pass only on the total amount of the budget, and the distribution of the funds is determined solely by the AUCCTU, which supervises the work of affiliated unions and regional and shop committees in administering the system.

Besides being used to pay benefits, pensions, etc., Mr. Gurbonov pointed out that the social insurance fund is also used for the establishment and maintenance of rest homes, sanatoria, prophylactoria, health resorts, children's summer camps, child care centers and other similar welfare services.

Free Medical Services

Medical services are free for all citizens of the Soviet Union and up to 1937 such services were covered by the social insurance fund, he said. Since that time they have been transferred to the government, so that the trade unions no longer bear any responsibility for medical services as such. Workers and their families may visit either factory or neighborhood clinics and hospitals, or have a doctor come to their homes. The only case in which they have to pay for any kind of medical service is when they are given prescriptions at home and have to get them filled at the drug store—in which case the medicine has to be paid for at government-controlled prices.

Up to 1930, unemployment insurance was included in the social insurance system, Mr. Gurbonov said. But with the disappearance of unemployment in the Soviet Union, there has since been no call for jobless benefits and the unemployment insurance fund has been used for other purposes. If a worker is rendered temporarily idle, through a breakdown of machinery, changes in equipment and similar causes, there is a general rule throughout Soviet industry that he must continue to receive his average rate of wages until production is resumed.

While the union-administered social insurance system covers only wage and salary earners, all other citizens are also provided for, according to

Mr. Gurbonov. Collective farmers and self-employed handicraftsmen, for instance, have their own mutual aid and benefit societies; the armed forces have a separate government system; and other citizens are covered by the government Social Welfare Department.

Front-Line Factories

The CIO delegation arrived in Leningrad by air on the afternoon of October 15, and shortly after its arrival met with the mayor of that city, Mr. Peter Popkov.

Mayor Popkov told us of the heroic defense of Leningrad by its people, who stopped the Nazis at their gates and held them at bay all through the long siege, although almost completely cut off from the rest of their country. The people had little or no food, fuel or water, and as many as 650,000 died of hunger and cold during the first terrible winter.

"I know of no battle in history where so many laid down their lives," Mayor Popkov said.

All civilians who could not fight or work were finally evacuated from the city, after Lake Ladoga, the city's only lifeline, had finally frozen



Escorted by Russian trade unionists, the CIO delegation gets first-hand information on Soviet industrial processes and labor organization.



Sec.-Treas. James B. Carey inscribes the visitors' book at the Museum of the Heroic Defense of Leningrad. "We hail your great feats," Carey wrote.

over sufficiently to permit transportation over it, the Mayor said. Leningrad was virtually transformed into a military camp with every street and every house a fortress.

Mr. Popkov paid glowing tribute to the trade unions of Leningrad. He said they had been the most active helpers in the defense of the city at every step, mobilizing three to four hundred thousand people to work at trench building and fortifications and maintaining the morale of the workers who produced munitions and supplies in unheated factories under constant bombardment.

Asked about future plans for housing and other necessities of this deserving, heroic people, Mayor Popkov said that by 1950, five years from now, new construction will have provided more than 2,000,000 square meters of new floor space. He stated that this will mean a minimum of nine square meters for each person in the city. He commented that this

space—measuring approximately 9 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches—would not seem much to an American coming from Chicago, New York or any other large American city, but that at the same time it must be considered a tremendous accomplishment in view of the war destruction.

He said that advances in transportation were being planned. Contemplated are 20 kilometers of subway (12½ miles), 15 kilometers of which is to be underground. Trolley lines will be extended by 250 kilometers (156 miles), and 250 new buses have been ordered.

The program for the introduction of gas that will eliminate the wood-burning cookstoves now in universal use, Mayor Popkov said, should be completed within four years with an expected production of 4½ million cubic meters. He commented that Berlin produced 2.8 million cubic meters in 1941 after 125 years of development.

Mayor Popkov said the plans call for making Leningrad one of the most beautiful cities in the world through the device of a big garden and park system. Plans have already been drawn for building a 250-acre park and a 165-acre park on the sites of major battles.



At the Museum of the Heroic Defense of Leningrad—Delegates Carey, Fitzgerald, De Caux, Haywood, Green, Robinson, Pressman, Abt, Rieve and Curran.

Industrially, Mayor Popkov said, Leningrad would take its place as one of the leading industrial centers of the Soviet Union. The manufacturing capacity of the city will be expanded; steel plants will be built; inland waterways and harbor facilities will be fully developed.

"On to Peace, Prosperity"

On the evening of October 15 the delegates attended the Leningrad ballet. The next day the CIO delegation saw many further evidences of the magnificent war achievements of the people of Leningrad, both at the exhibition of the Heroic Defense of Leningrad, and at the factories we later visited. At the Exhibition we saw samples of the minute rations of synthetic bread, which was about all the population had to live on for months, and other pictures and exhibits of devastation, suffering, death and heroic resistance.

Chairman Carey inscribed the visitor's record at the exhibition with the following sentiment:

"To the Heroic People of Leningrad: We hail your great feats that have surpassed anything in history. What you have accomplished to defend the freedom of the people of your land and the civilization of the world, will remain in the memory of the workers forever. On to victory together, with peace and prosperity.—James B. Carey for the CIO delegation."

The big Kirov machine-building plant, which we visited the same day, lay only three or four miles from the Nazi lines, from which it was under continual bombardment during the siege. Ten thousand shells fell on or around the plant, we were told. Much of the plant's machinery was moved to the East as the Nazis drew near Leningrad, but the director said it continued operating all through the siege, although there was insufficient fuel to heat it and hunger and cold took a constant toll of the workers.

Deputy Chairman Soloviev of the union shop committee told us how the union organized workers' battalions to defend the plant. The workers in the plant were armed and were given military training after working hours; and armed workers remained on the premises at night, constantly on guard against Nazi attack.

A Factory at War and Peace

In touring the Kirov plant, we saw whole sections of it almost completely destroyed by bombardment. But in those departments that were still standing or had been rebuilt strenuous efforts were being made to get back to peacetime production.

This plant was originally constructed by the Czar in 1801 and in its early years produced little except cannon balls and handcuffs. It boasts of having the oldest trade union in Soviet Russia, which was organized prior to 1917, when two-thirds of its 20,000 employees were members of the union. It was in this plant in 1895 that Lenin organized the Workmen's Circle, and Kalinin [former President of the USSR] worked here as a lathe hand. It was the first plant in the Soviet Union to be nationalized. Here it was that the Stalin tank was designed and built.

Present plans call for the building of turbines and subway transportation equipment, despite the director's assertion that it will take three years to rebuild the plant. He said frankly that the plant was 150 years old, and that integrating new machinery with the old outmoded equipment was a major project in itself. He said the foundry was producing more than before the war, with fewer workers available. The first turbine is scheduled for completion in the middle of 1946.

Shell splinters killed 750 workers in the plant during the siege, but the attack was not the only war problem. More than 9,000 of the plant's 30,000 employees in 1939 rushed to join the army and it became necessary for the union to impose restrictions on enlistments. Employment rolls at the plant now show that 60 percent of the workers are women. In all they produced during the war 4½ million land mines, 480 tanks, and 1,200,000 spades.

The director declared that American lend-lease food and clothing saved the lives of many during 1942.

Insufficient housing and the shortage of skilled workers are the chief immediate problems at the Kirov plant, union officials told us. Sixty percent of the workers' homes in the vicinity of the plant were destroyed during the siege, and whole suburbs where the workers lived were completely wiped out.

While visiting the Kirov plant the CIO delegates attended and addressed a meeting of the workers in the shop at change of shifts, and later went on to the trade union center in downtown Leningrad for a mass meeting of active unionists.

"The Price You've Paid"

This meeting was presided over by Peter Kazakov, Director of Organization of the AUCCTU, and was addressed by James B. Carey, Reid Robinson and Albert Fitzgerald on behalf of the CIO; all the speakers expressed their admiration for the war and peace achievements of the

workers of Leningrad and their earnest desire for closer cooperation between the peoples of the United States and the Soviet Union.

"You have gained friends who are going to insist that our government do everything in its power to aid you," Delegate Fitzgerald told the audience. "We've seen the price you have paid to establish freedom for all peoples of the world. We in America are determined that no force within or without is ever going to turn us against your people again."

Delegate Robinson, in his address, paid high tribute to the democratic ideal:

"We must break down the propaganda that you have no democracy as we have," he said.

A Workers' Clubhouse

The CIO delegates spent the evening at the Kirov "Palace of Culture," a large workers' clubhouse and entertainment center, which belongs to the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and is run by it in cooperation with an advisory committee of representatives of local unions in the vicinity.

Before the war, the Kirov Palace of Culture was capable of accommodating 10,000 people at one time in its various sports, entertainment, educational and other departments. During the war it was seriously damaged by bombardment, its heating system was destroyed, and it is estimated that it will cost 22 million rubles to rebuild and refurnish it.

However, we found that the children's section, sports section and gymnasium, two theatres (one for movies and the other for stage plays), dance hall, library, lounges, lecture hall and study rooms had already been reopened, and we were able to look in on the activities in full swing in most of these sections.

The workers' clubhouse, like most others in the Soviet Union, is entirely a trade union project except that most other clubhouses are run by local unions rather than by the AUCCTU. In the case of the Kirov clubhouse 20 percent of its budget comes in the form of a subsidy from the AUCCTU, which goes over all plans and appoints the director. The rest of the income comes from admission fees to movies, theaters, and concerts. There is also a charge for students who take special classes, but sports, dramatic groups, library, children's section and a number of other clubhouse activities are free.

On Wednesday, October 17, the CIO delegates divided into two groups, one of which toured the Peterhof suburb of Leningrad and visited the Baltic shipyards, while the other visited the Pushkin section and the Electrosila electrical manufacturing plant.

The suburban tours carried us to sections actually occupied by the Nazis, and revealed the wholesale devastation they caused—while the further factory visits gave us additional impressions of the destruction and the workers' heroism during the siege, as well as of the huge task of reconstruction which is now under way.

The Baltic Shipyards, we were told, suffered terrific bombing, which was estimated to have caused 200 million rubles of damage. Many of the workers had to sleep at the yards at night, due to lack of streetcar transportation. Despite these difficulties, lack of food and heating and countless other hardships, the director said, the shipyards did not stop work for a single day.

The electrical works is the most important plant of its type in the Soviet Union, having a tradition from before the revolution as the only plant in Europe that could do its type of work. The director told us that this plant had built half of the equipment used in the great Dnieper Dam, the other half coming from the United States.

The plant was shelled, rebuilt and shelled again during the war. Its production was 70 percent war material and 30 percent civilian goods. The director said that reconversion to civilian needs had started in January 1943 and that the plant was now back to 80 percent civilian production and 20 percent navy production.

"The shortage of skilled labor results in our not being able to use more semi-skilled workers," said the director.

He went on to say that the shortages here resulted in shortages elsewhere, and admitted frankly that there is more machinery than there is skilled labor to use it. Efforts are being made to train workers as tool and die makers, and the need is such that some of them are put to work with only six months' training, instead of the six years' training that the director considered normal as a training period. Some Germans are being used on skilled work and for training purposes, the director said, but the practice is not general.

On the evening of October 17, after a send-off banquet attended by a large number of Leningrad trade union leaders, the CIO delegation left by train for Moscow.

The Trade Union Set-Up

Most of the delegation's last day in the Soviet Union was spent at the headquarters of the AUCCTU in Moscow, a large office building housing some 600 employees of that organization as well as 600 officers and employees of about a score of affiliated unions that share these headquarters.

The wide scope of the trade unions' activities reflected in the departments included in the AUCCTU headquarters set-up were described to us. There are special departments, each with its own director and staff for wage negotiations; legal; organization; social insurance; rest homes and sanatoria; housing; workers' supplies; publications; labor safety and protection; physical culture and sports; international affairs; educational and cultural activities; research; as well as for personnel, office management and finances.

We visited most of these departments and interviewed a number of their directors.

Director Peter Kazakov of the Organization Department outlined for us the structure of the Soviet trade union movement. He said that industrial unionism is the rule there as in the CIO, with all the workers in each plant in a single union and one industrial union for each industry.

There are 168 All-Union industrial unions affiliated to the AUCCTU, each of them with divisions for the various Soviet Republics in which they operate. In addition, there are regional and district committees, and each factory has its shop committee and committees for each department. As a general rule a shop steward is elected for each twenty workers.

Mr. Kazakov emphasized that all union elections are by secret ballot. Departmental and shop committees and shop stewards are elected directly by the workers in the shops, who also elect their delegates to district and regional conventions; these conventions in turn elect the district and regional committees and the delegates to All-Union conventions.

How Soviets Determine Pay Scales

The supreme body in each industrial union is the All-Union Congress, or convention, which is required to be held at least once in every two years. The delegates to these conventions elect the union's Central Committee with a membership ranging from 35 to 70, and a Presidium of about 10 members; and the Central Committee in its turn elects the President and Secretary.

Each industrial union, regional or district committee, shop committee and departmental committee has departments or subcommittees to handle each phase of the union work, broken down along similar lines to those of the departments of the AUCCTU.

Union membership dues vary in different organizations, and approximate 1 percent of the workers' wages. The unions pay a per capita tax to the AUCCTU ranging from one to 4 percent of the dues they receive from their members.

For additional information on the unions' part in determining wage rates the CIO delegation interviewed Alex Stepanov, director of the Wages department of the AUCCTU.

He explained that the budget for each industry in the Soviet Union is drawn up by a top government planning body on which the AUCCTU is represented and consulted on the proportion of the budget which should go to wages, so that it can present the workers' demands and work for their incorporation in the national plan.

Once the total payroll has been determined for a particular industry, the government Commissariat (department) directing that industry consults with the industrial union on how this budget shall be divided between the various plants and sections of the industry. Finally, the union shop committee in each plant works out with its management the wage rates for the workers employed in that plant.

In explaining the detailed negotiations of wage rates, Mr. Stepanov pointed out that because of the great and generally recognized need for increasing production, and the immediate and tangible benefits which the workers can expect from increasing the supply of commodities, the great emphasis is placed on wage incentives of all kinds to increase output; piecework is the predominant system, and progressive piece rates (with double or triple pay for extra units of production) are common in many factories and operations.

In determining piece rates and rates of output per worker, the workers concerned are in all cases consulted, Mr. Stepanov said. They discuss the matter in factory meetings and the shop committee takes up their suggestions and demands with the management, with a view to their incorporation in the collective agreement. The final rates have to be referred back to the shop committee and cannot be placed in force until that committee has attached its signature to them.

Individual grievances over wages and conditions are referred to a "rates and conflict committee" on which management and union are equally represented, according to Mr. Stepanov. This committee can dis-

cuss a particular grievance only in the presence of the worker who advances it and the decision must be made openly in his presence. The decision can be appealed through a whole series of higher committees of union and management, but if it is still unsettled after this procedure has been followed the final decision will rest with the AUCCTU. Once a decision has been duly rendered a plant director who fails to comply with it can be taken to court and made to pay damages if found guilty.



Conference: CIO delegates and Soviet union leaders sit around the table to discuss labor problems in the United States and the USSR. The scene above, duplicated many times during the American unionists' eight-day tour, was in the director's office of a large Leningrad factory.

How Much Do Wages Buy?

For information on prices and the purchasing power of Soviet wages, the CIO delegation interviewed Matthew Berbasov, Director of Workers' Supply Department of the AUCCTU.

He told us that rationing was introduced as a war measure and the amount of a worker's ration varies according to the kind of work he performs, those doing heavy work getting more food than those doing light or office work. Extra rations are also provided for expectant mothers, persons in a tubercular condition and other special groups; and special ration cards are provided for children to enable them to get the kinds of food they need.

Prices for the food and other supplies to which people are entitled on their ration cards are rigidly controlled at pre-war levels. But purchases beyond these rations may also be made at much higher prices at

the so-called "commercial store" or for still higher prices on the open market where farmers bring their goods over and above their quota to the state.

Rents are strictly controlled and vary from 5 to 14 percent of a worker's wages, according to figures given to the delegation.

It is difficult, however, to make any exact appraisal of the purchasing power of Soviet wages because of the above-mentioned differences in prices for goods bought within the ration and the same kind of goods legally purchased beyond the ration; because of the various medical and other social services which a Soviet worker receives free or for a nominal charge; and because of the shortage of most consumers' goods, which makes a worker less concerned with the amount of his wages than with finding commodities which he can buy with them.

To increase the workers' food supplies the trade unions have set up workers' supply departments and special committees in all large factories which concern themselves with the plant dining rooms, with special farms to supply products to their plants, and with other methods of adding to the rationed food supplies. Victory gardens have been actively promoted by the unions, and the number of them has increased from five million in 1942 to more than 18 million in 1945.

For similar reasons of increasing the supply of available commodities and thus raising living standards, the Soviet trade unions place the greatest stress on increasing production in every field and by every means possible.

"We Have Been Deeply Moved"

After visiting the headquarters of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, the CIO delegates held a press conference at the offices of Trud, the daily newspaper of the AUCCTU. At that conference, Chairman James B. Carey made the following statement on behalf of the CIO delegation:

"Our visit to the Soviet Union as guests of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions has been brief due to the pressure of reconversion problems in the United States which necessitates our early return. But it has been long enough to leave with us some deep and very positive impressions.

"We have been deeply moved by the personal warmth and friendship shown to us on all sides, not only by our official hosts but also by the rank and file of union workers with whom we have met in



On the move: CIO delegates covered a lot of ground during their visit to Soviet plants. Here they're leaving a large Leningrad machine factory.

plants, shop meetings and workers' clubs. The eager desire of the Soviet people for closer ties of understanding and friendship with the people of the United States has been evidenced again and again.

"It has greatly strengthened our own determination as CIO representatives to do everything within our power to cement our cordial relations with the Soviet trade unions and to establish even closer unity between our two great countries for the maintenance of lasting peace and for growing prosperity and democratic progress.

"We were particularly impressed at Leningrad and here at Moscow by the magnificent heroism of a people who under indescribable difficulties held the Nazis at bay on the outskirts of their greatest cities and thus helped turn the tide of the whole war for the United Nations. We were horrified by the wholesale destruction wrought by the Nazis, but filled with the greatest admiration for the determination and united effort of the people which has already brought about substantial reconstruction and promises great things for the future elevation of living standards.

"I am sure that any other Americans who could see what we have seen would be moved by the same feeling of deep human sympathy which we have felt and by the same desire to assist and cooperate in the great tasks in which the Soviet people are now engaged. We be-

lieve that America can assist greatly by supplying many of the machines and other products which the Soviet Union so sorely needs, and that in so doing we shall be promoting our own prosperity and drawing closer together our two peoples for their common goals.

Pride of Association

“As trade unionists, we have of course paid particular attention to the activities of the Soviet trade unions. We have been impressed by their promoting of the interests of the workers, as well as by their magnificent and wholehearted participation in winning the war and in the tasks of reconstruction. We have also noted with pleasure their many activities of a social welfare and cultural character and the comprehensive nature of the social security system which they operate.

“Our observations have increased our pride in being associated with such a great trade union movement through the World Federation of Trade Unions.

“We are sure that our visit and the report we shall bring back to American labor will aid in cementing international trade union unity and in bringing about a closer understanding and more active cooperation between our two peoples. We wish to express our thanks and appreciation to the Soviet trade union movement for giving us this opportunity and for its most generous hospitality.”

Confab With Molotov

Following the press conference, the CIO delegation spent an hour with Foreign Commissar V. M. Molotov, who stressed his government's desire for the closest Soviet-American friendship—sentiments which were reciprocated by the delegates.

Commissar Molotov discussed frankly with the delegation the great importance of improving the standard of living for the people of the Soviet Union. He agreed with Mr. Carey's observation that an increase in living standards of all workers was imperatively essential to world peace and security.

In the evening, we were given a most warm and friendly send-off at an affair presided over by President Kuznetsov of the AUCCTU, and early in the morning of October 19 we left Moscow by air for London on our way back to the United States.



Shop stewards and union officials pose with CIO representatives under a banner expressing "Hearty Greetings" of the workers at the Kirov plant in Leningrad to "The Congress of Trade Unions of the United States."

The delegation cannot conclude its report without again expressing its deep appreciation to President Kuznetsov and the other officers and members of the Soviet trade unions for their generous and unfailing hospitality.

The reception we received everywhere made a deep impression on us, as did the eagerness of all Soviet citizens we met to demonstrate their respect and friendship toward American labor and the American people.

The CIO Group's Impressions

This visit has made us more than ever determined, as CIO representatives, to strengthen our movement's ties with the Soviet trade unions, as with the labor movements of other countries, and to promote closer understanding and cooperation between our peoples for enduring peace and world prosperity and progress.

We were impressed with the character of the Soviet trade unions, and with their many excellent activities in promoting the interest of the workers, in the economic, social welfare and cultural fields—as well as with the most far-reaching character of the social insurance system they operate, which is designed to protect working people and their families against all contingencies from the cradle to the grave.

While there are many obvious differences in the systems and governments of the United States and the Soviet Union, we found parallels in the functioning of labor unions in both countries, as indeed throughout the world.

We express our admiration and respect for the effort of the trade unions and the people of the Soviet Union for their part in winning the war and setting about the huge tasks of reconstruction that is absolutely necessary to raise a standard of living that is low compared with American standards.

We saw horrifying evidences on all sides of ghastly destruction wrought by the Nazis in their invasion of the USSR. But we also saw substantial progress in reconstruction and much evidence of the unity and determination of the people in rebuilding and developing their industries to make possible the higher living standards that will come with increased production.

How We Can Help

The United States can do much to aid the people of the Soviet Union in their great tasks of reconstruction and economic development by supplying many of the machines, industrial techniques, and other products which they so badly need. In so doing, we shall not only be increasing our foreign trade and making more jobs for American workers, but we shall also be laying up a store of goodwill for ourselves from a great people whose cooperation we shall need in peace as much as in war for our own future welfare and security.

There must be an enlarged interchange of people between the two countries. Past practices of exchanging students should be expanded, but side by side with this development should go the interchange of workers who can both learn and teach the most modern industrial methods. An organization known as the International Training Administration, Inc., has developed for the United States such activity in other cases. Perhaps

Soviet Russia will establish a similar vehicle for the interchange of workers between the two countries.

The recent establishment of a Soviet-American Trade Union Committee, as approved by the CIO Executive Board and the AUCCTU, is heartily welcomed as providing a continuing medium for the exchange of information and the promotion of ever-closer relations between our two trade union movements.

We hope that the visit of the Soviet Trade Union delegation to the United States and our return visit to the USSR will be the forerunner of many similar exchanges in the future.

The peace and prosperity of our countries and of the world depend not only upon the cooperation of governments but even more upon the understanding and friendship which may be fostered between the working and common people of all countries. The CIO sent our delegation to the USSR to promote this purpose, and our visit has added to our determination to continue its promotion in the future in every way we can.

CIO Publications

THE CIO NEWS. Official weekly newspaper of the CIO. Subscription, \$1 a year (\$1.50 in Canada). Special rates for bundle orders, group subscriptions and special editions upon request.

UNION NEWS SERVICE. A weekly clipsheet for editors.

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